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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine more systematically the nature and structure of the social interaction objectives that individuals pursue in their everyday social relations. A pilot study was conducted to obtain a set of naturalistic social goals. Subjects in two studies were given the task of classifying these goals according to their similarities, and multidimensional scaling analyses were conducted in order to examine the dimensionality of subjects' cognitive representations of their social goals. In study one, 70 undergraduates from Ohio State University were asked to suggest the social goals they most often pursue in their interactions with others. Subjects identified and labeled 20 social goals, which were then grouped by 64 undergraduates from York University. This grouping revealed three goal dimensions: an information versus sociability focus, a self-gain versus relationship focus, and a task versus social manipulation focus. The three-dimensional solution reflected a highly interpretable representation of the dimensions underlying subjects' cognitive representations of social interaction objectives. To examine the replicability of the findings in study one, subjects in study two (54 undergraduates from York University) were presented with the same stimuli and task. The ordering of social goals for each of the three dimensions appeared very similar to those obtained in study one. The results of the two studies revealed a highly reliable structure describing subjects' cognitive representations of their social interaction objectives. (LH)

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SOCIAL GOALS: THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF
SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES
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STUDENTS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION HAVE TRADITIONALLY EMPHASIZED THE STRATEGIC NATURE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION, WHEREIN INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOR IS SEEN TO BE ENACTED IN PURSUIT OF SPECIFIC PERSONAL OBJECTIVES OR SOCIAL GOALS (E.G., ATHAY & DARLEY, 1981; GOFFMAN, 1959; JONES & THIBAUT, 1958). CURRENT INTEREST IN THIS AREA DERIVES IN LARGE PART FROM DEMONSTRATIONS THAT SUCH SOCIAL GOALS CAN HAVE IMPORTANT EFFECTS ON THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF THE INTERACTANTS (E.G., HIGGINS, MCCANN & FONDACARO, 1981; MCCANN & HANCOCK, 1983; SNYDER & SWANN, 1978) AND ON THE MANNER IN WHICH SOCIAL INFORMATION IS PROCESSED (E.G., HAMILTON, KATZ & LEIRER, 1981; HIGGINS & MCCANN, 1984; JEFFERY & MISCHEL, 1979; MCCANN & HANCOCK, 1983; MCCANN & HIGGINS, IN PRESS).

ALTHOUGH A GREAT DEAL OF EFFORT HAS BEEN DIRECTED TOWARD AN EXAMINATION OF THE BEHAVIORAL AND INFORMATION PROCESSING EFFECTS OF SOCIAL GOALS, LITTLE ATTENTION HAS BEEN PAID TO THE NATURE OF SOCIAL GOALS THEMSELVES. RESEARCH IN THIS AREA HAS BEEN LIMITED BY: A) THE LIMITED RANGE OF PROCESSING OBJECTIVES OR SOCIAL GOALS EXAMINED TO DATE; B) THE LARGELY SPECULATIVE NATURE OF THE TYPOLOGIES OF SOCIAL GOALS UTILIZED; AND C) ITS FAILURE TO ADDRESS THE RELEVANCE OF THE GOALS EXAMINED TO NATURALISTIC, EVERYDAY SOCIAL INTERACTION. COHEN (1981), BASED ON EARLIER FORMULATIONS BY JONES & THIBAUT (1958), HAS SUGGESTED A TRIPARTITE CLASSIFICATION OF PROCESSING OBJECTIVES, REFLECTING LEARNING, IMPRESSION FORMATION AND SOCIAL JUDGEMENT DIMENSIONS. ALTHOUGH A GREAT DEAL OF SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH HAS BEEN CONDUCTED

DEMONSTRATING THE DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF SUCH GOALS (E.G. HOFFMAN, MISCHEL & MAZZE, 1981), LITTLE CONSIDERATION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE NATURE OF THE SOCIAL GOALS INDIVIDUALS PURSUE IN THEIR INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS IN THEIR EVERYDAY SOCIAL INTERACTIONS. OUR INSIGHT INTO THESE ISSUES IS INCOMPLETE WITHOUT A CONSIDERATION OF THE NATURE AND EFFECTS OF THE INTERACTION OBJECTIVES PURSUED BY INDIVIDUALS IN MORE NATURALISTIC SITUATIONS.

THE PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH WAS TO MORE SYSTEMATICALLY EXAMINE THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF THE SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES THAT INDIVIDUALS PURSUE IN THEIR EVERYDAY SOCIAL INTERACTIONS. A PILOT STUDY WAS CONDUCTED IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A SET OF NATURALISTIC SOCIAL GOALS. SUBJECTS IN STUDIES ONE AND TWO WERE GIVEN THE TASK OF CLASSIFYING THESE GOALS ACCORDING TO THEIR SIMILARITY AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL SCALING ANALYSES WERE CONDUCTED IN ORDER TO EXAMINE THE DIMENSIONALITY OF SUBJECTS' COGNITIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF THEIR SOCIAL GOALS.

STUDY ONE

METHOD

STIMULUS MATERIALS.

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A SET OF NATURALISTIC SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES SEVENTY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WERE ASKED TO SUGGEST THE SOCIAL GOALS THEY MOST OFTEN PURSUE IN THEIR INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS. ALL SUBJECTS WERE GIVEN 15

MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE TASK AND WERE GIVEN COURSE CREDIT FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION. THE SOCIAL GOALS SUGGESTED BY THE SUBJECTS WERE COLLATED BY TWO JUDGES (RETAINING ONLY THOSE GOALS MENTIONED BY AT LEAST 10% OF THE SAMPLE) WHO SUPPLIED LABELS DESCRIPTIVE OF THE GOALS IN EACH CATEGORY. THE TWENTY SOCIAL GOALS OBTAINED THROUGH THESE PROCEDURES ARE PRESENTED IN TABLE 1.

SUBJECTS.

SIXTY-FOUR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT YORK UNIVERSITY WERE RECRUITED FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN STUDY ONE. ALL SUBJECTS WERE VOLUNTEERS AND RECEIVED NO COMPENSATION FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION.

PROCEDURE.

IN ORDER TO EXAMINE THE STRUCTURE OF SUBJECTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL GOALS THE BASIC DATUM OF ELEMENT CONCURRENCE WAS REQUIRED (E.G. SCHIFFMAN, REYNOLDS & YOUNG, 1981). SUBJECTS WERE PRESENTED WITH A LIST OF THE TWENTY SOCIAL GOALS ON A SHEET OF PAPER AND WERE ASKED TO GROUP THEM BY PLACING CATEGORY NUMBERS IN THE RIGHT HAND COLUMN OF THE PAGE. SUBJECTS WERE TOLD THAT THEY SHOULD GROUP THEM ACCORDING TO THEIR SIMILARITY OF PURPOSE IN THEIR OWN VIEW.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

THE GOAL CATEGORIZATIONS OF EACH OF THE SUBJECTS WERE ENTERED INTO INDIVIDUAL MATRICIES OF WHICH THE ROWS AND COLUMNS CONSISTED OF THE TWENTY SOCIAL GOALS. DISSIMILARITY MATRICIES WERE CONSTRUCTED BY PLACING A 0 INTO THE INTERSECTION OF GOAL TYPES THAT WERE PLACED INTO THE SAME CATEGORIES AND A 1 INTO THE

INTERSECTION OF GOAL TYPES THAT WERE PLACED INTO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES. THE COMBINED DISSIMILARITY MATRIX FOR SUBJECTS IN STUDY ONE WAS ANALYZED BY MEANS OF THE SAS (1980) PROCEDURE (YOUNG & LEWICKYJ, 1980) IN ORDER TO DERIVE THE DIMENSIONAL STRUCTURE OF SUBJECTS' CATEGORIZATIONS. SOLUTIONS WERE OBTAINED IN 5, 4, 3, 2, AND 1 DIMENSIONS. IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE OPTIMAL DIMENSIONALITY THE TWO MEASURES PRODUCED BY THE SAS ALSICAL PROCEDURE (I.E., STRESS AND SQUARED CORRELATION) AND THE INTERPRETABILITY OF THE DIMENSIONS WERE UTILIZED. THE STRESS VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH ASCENDING DIMENSIONALITY WERE, RESPECTIVELY, .429, .204, .145, .104, .072. THE SQUARED CORRELATION VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH ASCENDING DIMENSIONALITY WERE, RESPECTIVELY, .530, .782, .852, .899 AND .942. BASED UPON THE ABOVE CRITERIA, THE THREE DIMENSIONAL SOLUTION APPEARED OPTIMAL. THE SOCIAL GOALS AND THEIR STIMULUS COORDINATES ASSOCIATED WITH THE THREE DIMENSIONAL SOLUTION ARE PRESENTED IN TABLE 1.

THE MEANING OF THE THREE DIMENSIONAL SOLUTION WAS DETERMINED ON THE BASIS OF THE SOCIAL GOALS LOCATED AT DIFFERENT POINTS ON EACH OF THE DIMENSIONS. THE FIRST DIMENSION APPEARED TO REFLECT AN INFORMATION VS. SOCIABILITY FOCUS, THE SECOND DIMENSION A SELF-GAIN VS. RELATIONSHIP FOCUS, AND THE THIRD DIMENSION A TASK VS. SOCIAL MANIPULATION FOCUS. THUS, THE THREE DIMENSIONAL SOLUTION REFLECTS A HIGHLY INTERPRETABLE REPRESENTATION OF THE DIMENSION UNDERLYING SUBJECTS' COGNITIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES.

STUDY TWO

METHOD.

STUDY ONE WAS DESIGNED AS AN INITIAL EXAMINATION OF THE NATURE OF SUBJECTS' REPRESENTATIONS OF THEIR SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES. GIVEN THE NOVEL AND EXPLORATORY NATURE OF THIS STUDY, IT WAS DECIDED TO CONDUCT AN EXACT REPLICATION IN ORDER TO EXAMINE THE REPLICABILITY OF THE FINDINGS. SUBJECTS IN STUDY TWO WERE PRESENTED WITH THE SAME STIMULI AND TASK TO COMPLETE. FIFTY-FOUR UNDERGRADUATES AT YORK UNIVERSITY WERE RECRUITED FOR STUDY TWO AND WERE PAID FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

AS IN STUDY ONE, THE DISSIMILARITY MATRIX PRODUCED BY SUBJECTS' CATEGORIZATION OF THE SOCIAL GOALS WAS ANALYZED BY MEANS OF THE SAS ALSCAL (1980) PROCEDURE. SOLUTIONS WERE OBTAINED IN 5, 4, 3, 2, AND 1 DIMENSIONS. THE STRESS VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH ASCENDING DIMENSIONALITY WERE .469, .251, .160, .101, .032, AND THE SQUARED CORRELATIONS WERE .536, .691, .799, .879, AND .907. AGAIN THE THREE DIMENSIONAL SOLUTION APPEARS OPTIMAL AND THE STIMULUS COORDINATES ASSOCIATED WITH THE THREE DIMENSIONS ARE PRESENTED IN TABLE 2. AS IS CLEAR IN TABLE 2, THE ORDERING OF SOCIAL GOALS FOR EACH OF THE THREE DIMENSIONS IS VERY SIMILAR TO THOSE OBTAINED IN STUDY ONE.

CONCLUSIONS

ALTHOUGH PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE INCREASINGLY EMPHASIZED THE GOAL

ORIENTED NATURE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION LITTLE ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO EXAMINE THE NATURE OF THE SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES PURSUED BY INDIVIDUALS IN NATURALISTIC CONTEXTS. THE PRESENT PAPER DETAILS THE RESULTS OF TWO STUDIES DESIGNED TO EXAMINE THE DIMENSIONALITY OF INDIVIDUALS' EVERYDAY SOCIAL GOALS. THE RESULTS OF TWO STUDIES REVEALED A HIGHLY RELIABLE STRUCTURE DESCRIBING SUBJECTS' COGNITIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF THEIR SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES. THE PRESENT RESULTS HAVE IMPLICATIONS BOTH FOR RESEARCH EXAMINING SOCIAL RESEARCH PER SE AND FOR RESEARCH EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF GOALS ON THE MANNER IN WHICH WE PROCESS SOCIAL INFORMATION. IN ADDITION, THE PRESENT RESULTS HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER AREAS OF PSYCHOLOGY. FOR EXAMPLE, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE EVIDENCED AN INCREASING CONCERN FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH DEPRESSED INDIVIDUALS INTERACT WITH OTHERS IN THEIR SOCIAL WORLDS (E.G., COYNE, 1976). ALTHOUGH A NUMBER OF DIFFERENCES HAVE BEEN FOUND BETWEEN THE SOCIAL INTERACTION STYLES OF DEPRESSED AND NON-DEPRESSED INDIVIDUALS, NO ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO EXAMINE THE OBJECTIVES THAT DEPRESSED INDIVIDUALS SEEK TO ACHIEVE IN THEIR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS. IT MAY BE THAT PREVIOUS RESEARCH THAT HAS BEEN INTERPRETED AS DEMONSTRATING THE SOCIAL SKILLS DEFICITS CHARACTERISTIC OF DEPRESSIVES (E.G., LEWINSOHN, 1974) MAY, IN PART, REFLECT THE INAPPROPRIATE NATURE OF THEIR SOCIAL INTERACTION OBJECTIVES. RESEARCH IS CURRENTLY BEING CONDUCTED IN ORDER TO EXAMINE THIS POSSIBILITY.

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TABLE ONE

<u>DIMENSION ONE</u>		<u>DIMENSION TWO</u>		<u>DIMENSION THREE</u>	
1.8137	CHECK IDEAS	1.7186	PERSUADE OTHERS	1.7400	JOB DONE
1.7442	OBTAIN INFORMATION	1.3032	CREATE AN IMPRESSION	1.2073	OBTAIN INFORMATION
1.59773	EXPRESS OPINION	1.2401	AVOID BEING BORED	0.7872	AVOID BEING BORED
1.5577	JOB DONE	1.0249	GET A DATE	0.7642	LEARN OF OTHERS
1.2937	PERSUADE OTHERS	0.7886	GET APPROVAL	0.1846	GIVE HELP
0.9969	GET ADVICE	0.7820	JOB DONE	0.0746	BE SOCIABLE
0.8516	GET HELP	0.6479	OBTAIN INFORMATION	0.0540	HAVE FUN
0.5011	GIVE HELP	0.4096	CHECK IDEAS	0.0532	GET A DATE
0.4611	GET APPROVAL	0.3546	BE SOCIABLE	0.0270	MAKE ACQUAINTANCE
0.0659	SHARE IDEAS	0.2254	MAKE ACQUAINTANCE	0.0020	GET ADVICE
0.0517	EXPRESS EMOTION	0.0919	AVOID ALONE	-0.0020	CHECK IDEAS
-0.1304	CREATE AN IMPRESSION	-0.2391	EXPRESS OPINION	-0.0193	MAINTAIN FRIENDSHIP
-0.7714	MAINTAIN FRIENDSHIP	-0.2566	LEARN OF OTHERS	-0.0305	GET HELP
-1.2273	LEARN OF OTHERS	-0.5467	HAVE FUN	-0.0769	AVOID ALONE
-1.3021	AVOID BEING BORED	-1.0868	GET ADVICE	-0.1733	SHARE IDEAS
-1.3955	AVOID ALONE	-1.2412	LEARN OF OTHERS	-0.4946	EXPRESS EMOTION
-1.4424	HAVE FUN	-1.2273	MAINTAIN FRIENDSHIP	-0.7349	EXPRESS OPINION
-1.5219	GET A DATE	-1.2657	EXPRESS EMOTION	-0.8059	PERSUADE OTHERS
-1.5386	BE SOCIABLE	-1.2922	GET HELP	-1.1526	CREATE IMPRESSION
-1.6057	MAKE ACQUAINTANCE	-1.4165	GIVE HELP	-1.4060	GET APPROVAL

TABLE TWO

<u>DIMENSION ONE</u>		<u>DIMENSION TWO</u>		<u>DIMENSION THREE</u>	
1.5907	CHECK IDEAS	1.6883	JOB DONE	1.7370	PERSUADE OTHERS
1.4460	OBTAIN INFORMATION	1.2439	CREATE AN IMPRESSION	1.1629	EXPRESS OPINION
1.2948	GET HELP	1.1421	GET APPROVAL	1.1142	EXPRESS EMOTION
1.2819	EXPRESS OPINION	0.7704	AVOID BEING BORED	0.7537	CREATE IMPRESSION
1.2330	JOB DONE	0.7191	PERSUADE OTHERS	0.4839	SHARE IDEAS
1.2304	GET ADVICE	0.6735	OBTAIN INFORMATION	0.3999	HAVE FUN
1.2063	PERSUADE OTHERS	0.6580	GET A DATE	0.2915	GET APPROVAL
1.1767	GET APPROVAL	0.6475	AVOID ALONE	0.1870	BE SOCIABLE
0.7978	GIVE HELP	0.4564	MAKE ACQUAINTANCE	0.1100	AVOID BORED
0.3199	SHARE IDEAS	0.2405	CHECK IDEAS	0.0100	GET DATE
-0.0402	EXPRESS EMOTION	0.0409	BE SOCIABLE	-0.1568	JOB DONE
-0.6779	MAINTAIN FRIENDSHIP	-0.3239	GET ADVICE	-0.1664	GIVE HELP
-0.7877	CREATE AN IMPRESSION	-0.4023	LEARN OF OTHERS	-0.3313	AVOID ALONE
-1.0887	LEARN OF OTHERS	-0.4032	EXPRESS OPINION	-0.3388	MAKE ACQUAINTANCE
-1.1360	HAVE FUN	-0.7145	GET HELP	-0.4734	MAINTAIN FRIENDSHIP
-1.5355	MAKE ACQUAINTANCE	-1.0345	HAVE FUN	-0.7522	CHECK IDEAS
-1.5473	AVOID ALONE	-1.2796	EXPRESS EMOTION	-0.8128	GET HELP
-1.5620	AVOID BEING BORED	-1.3371	MAINTAIN FRIENDSHIP	-1.0367	OBTAIN INFORMATION
-1.5986	GET A DATE	-1.3796	SHARE IDEAS	-1.0676	LEARN OF OTHERS
-1.6036	BE SOCIABLE	-1.3961	GIVE HELP	-1.1141	GET ADVICE